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Ft. Smith, Ark.



What It Is.

What It Has.

What It Offers.







COURT HOUSE.

## THIS PAMPHLET,

**P**REPARED by the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, an organization in no manner connected with speculation nor speculators, is believed to be in all its statements correct and truthful. The FACTS concerning FT. SMITH make an argument that needs no embellishment. The

### CLOSEST INVESTIGATION

By Manufacturers, Business Men, Capitalists and Good Citizens is Courted, and specific information will be cheerfully furnished by the

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,  
FORT SMITH, ARK.



# FORT SMITH, ARK.



Its History.

Its Commerce.

Its Location.

Itself.



# FORT \* SMITH, \* ARK.



## HISTORICAL.

**I**N 1817 the Government established a military post at the confluence of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers, and called it Fort Smith. The border merchant, attracted by the profitable traffic with the Indians and the safety afforded by his country's flag, soon settled around the fort, and the embryo American city was started.

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## MILITARY.

The Seventh Regiment of Infantry remained at this place until 1825, by which time the small civil settlement had grown slightly in the number and considerably in the quality of its inhabitants, and the post was considered a pleasant one both in army and lay circles. In this year one John Rogers purchased several hundred acres of land from the Government, and found the first profitable real estate investment of the locality, for in 1836 the Government found it must have a reservation about its fort, and bought back a part of the land at an increased price, and Rogers laid out the remainder in a town-site, from which all newcomers had to secure lots. The town was christened "Belle Point" by its proprietor, who was doubtless led in his selection of the name by an artistic appreciation of the beauty of the location; but, though appropriate, that name was not adopted by the practical citizens who grappled more successfully with the equally euphonious if not so artistic name of Smith, or Fort Smith, and the baptismal name would now be quite forgotten were it not applied to one of the handsome school edifices which adorn the town.

## TRADING POST.

Fort Smith struggled along as a frontier trading-post for many years, gaining importance during the Mexican War when many of the troops and Government supplies were sent to the front by this route, being brought up the Arkansas River by boat to Fort Smith. In 1871 the garrison was removed further west to Fort Gibson, but Fort Smith, the town, was then firmly established, and with overland stage routes to the far west, large steamboats plying regularly between Cincinnati, St. Louis, New Orleans and Fort Smith, she continued to grow slowly, until in 1880 the census reports show her to have had 3,000 population.

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## FIRST RAILROADS.

The Little Rock & Fort Smith Railway was the first railroad connection, being completed to Fort Smith in 1876. It was followed soon after by the St. Louis & San Francisco Railway, which gave a decided impetus to Fort Smith trade, and from 1880 to 1884 her population was more than doubled. Meanwhile, the Government having removed its fort and having no further use for the reservation purchased from John Rogers (except that small portion upon which the Federal Court having jurisdiction over the Indian Territory was located, and the jail in which the prisoners were confined), donated this 360 acres of land to the city of Fort Smith for public school purposes. The value of this gift may be appreciated when it is stated that less than half of the land has been sold for over \$350,000, and is fairly well covered with handsome residences, public buildings and large factories. This is mentioned as one of the causes leading to the large influx of population which has occurred since 1884, giving Fort Smith in 1893 about 15,000 souls. Other causes which have contributed to the same have been the building of railroads to Paris, Tex., Coffeyville, Kan., Greenwood, Ark., and Mansfield, Ark.; the opening of the mammoth semi-anthracite coal fields of which Fort Smith is the center; the partial development of a few of the many lines of profitable manufacturing that Fort Smith has peculiar advantages for, and the constantly increasing agricultural population in Western Arkansas and the Indian Territory, which is almost exclusively tributary to the wholesale trade of Fort Smith.



## COMMERCIAL.

The five important factors in the growth and development of an inland city are: 1. Its situation with reference to an agricultural country. 2. The absence of rival distributing points. 3. Transportation facilities. 4. Manufacturing advantages. 5. Desirability as a place of residence.

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## AGRICULTURAL SURROUNDINGS.

Fort Smith's tributary agricultural country consists of Western Arkansas and the Indian Territory. Western Arkansas land is of two kinds, the valley and river bottoms being one kind, and the hill and mountain lands the other. The former are almost entirely alluvial and are very fertile, producing cotton and corn abundantly. The latter produces wheat, oats, hay, potatoes and fruits and berries in good quantity. The quality of these products can be judged from the fact that the premium wheat at the New Orleans Exposition came from an Arkansas upland farm, fifty miles from Fort Smith, and Arkansas apples have carried off first prizes in all contests of the past five years from Boston to California. The Indian Territory farm lands are generally prairie and river valleys and yield cotton and the cereals equally well. The acreage in cultivation in the Territory is increasing marvelously each year and is adding steadily to Fort Smith's distributive area.

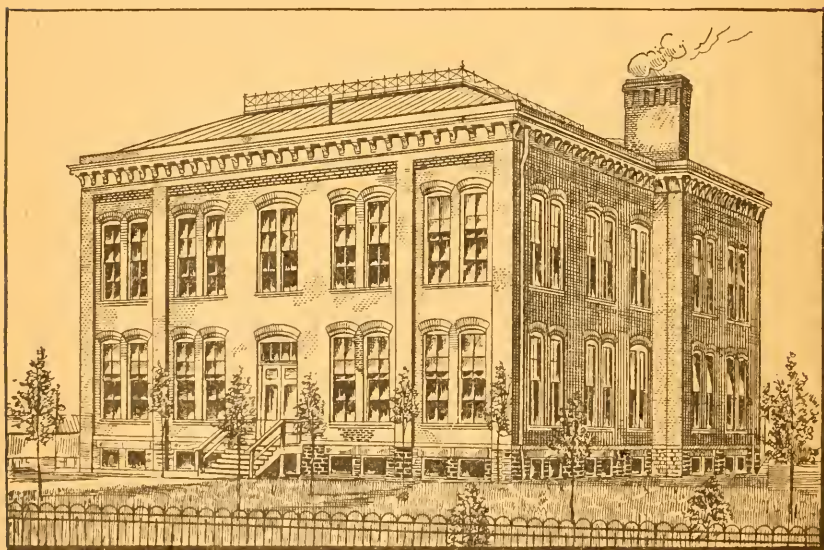
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## EARLY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.

There is a fine country in the immediate vicinity of Fort Smith for raising Early Vegetables, Berries, Grapes, Melons and small fruits. Everyone who has done anything in the way of market gardening knows what a difference three or four weeks makes in the price of the articles offered for sale. The land along the Arkansas River, upon which Fort Smith is located, is the first, going South, from Kansas City, where early market gardening for shipping can be successfully followed. The seasons at Fort Smith, between late spring and early fall frosts, are from five to six weeks longer than they are forty miles North of it, and from seven to eight weeks longer than at Kansas City.

The soil and climate are well adapted to the culture of Irish and Sweet Potatoes, Cantaloupes, Watermelons, Peas, Sweet

Corn, Summer Squash, Salsify, Okra, Carrots, Beets, Kohl Rabi, Tomatoes, Onions, Cucumbers, Egg Plant, Peppers, Snap and Lima Beans, Strawberries, Dewberries, Blackberries, Peaches, Wild Goose Plums, Grapes and Apples. The fact that much may be done in the way of gardening in February will give some idea of the advantages of this section. A Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association has been established, and good rates and refrigerator car service has been secured. There is a good opening in this immediate vicinity for men who understand the business. Quite a number here with little or no experience in such work are engaged in it and doing well.



BELLE POINT SCHOOL BUILDING.

### SUPERIOR LOCATION.

Fort Smith is particularly fortunate in the absence of rival distributing points. Situated on the western boundary line of the State, where the Arkansas river breaks through the Boston mountains, she occupies the only spot topographically available for a large city and easily accessible by railroads along that entire border. To the West lies the Indian Territory, a stretch of country nearly 400 miles square, and admittedly one of the most fertile sections of the Union, with Guthrie as the chief town, a place



of 5,000 people, two hundred miles distant. On the North no town of over 3,500 people for one hundred and seventy-five miles, Springfield, Mo., being the nearest wholesaling point, and Kansas City, which is three hundred miles away, the nearest large city. On the East, no town of over 2,000 people exists for one hundred and sixty-five miles, Little Rock being the nearest wholesaling point in that direction, and Memphis, which is some three hundred miles from Fort Smith, the nearest city of important size; and on the South, one hundred and seventy-five miles away, is Texarkana, the only town of commensurate size, with Dallas as the closest large city.

Leaving aside consideration of the tributary Indian Country, which opened to settlement, would of course by itself build its supply point into a large city, and leaving aside all account of its superior manufacturing advantages, which are of equal importance, will not Fort Smith increase in her size and commerce proportionately with the growth of the surrounding portions of Arkansas, now sparsely settled but inviting and beginning to receive the great influx of population from the colder and less fertile Northern States? And if so, what will her future be when the Indian Territory becomes a State, and her manifold manufacturing advantages, have been availed of? The answers to these questions are left to the consideration of those to whom this pamphlet is addressed.

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## RIVER TRANSPORTATION.

In the very important matter of transportation facilities, Fort Smith is not lacking and the prospects are she would be embarrassed with them in the not distant future if such a thing were possible. The Arkansas river, on which she is located, is navigable for small boats all through the year, and for large steamers from the Mississippi for a part of the year. Before the advent of the railroads regular packet lines plied between Fort Smith and Mississippi river points. The river business is now confined to local trade, which has so increased lately as to furnish a paying business to three boats owned by the merchants. The river transportation gives the city a considerable advantage in the matter of keeping railroad freights on heavy goods reasonable, Fort Smith, as a river town, being used as a basing point.

## RAILROADS.

Fort Smith's completed railroads are the Little Rock & Fort Smith, Kansas & Arkansas Valley, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe to St. Louis, Mo.; same system to Paris, Texas and the Fort Smith & Mansfield. At Wistar Junction, thirty-five miles south of Fort Smith, connection is made with the Choctaw Coal & Railway Co., now completed sixty-five miles west and being built west to Oklahoma. These roads bring the immense gas and coking coal fields of the Indian Territory within easy reach of Fort Smith, the distance to the nearest mines being only twenty-eight miles. The Fort Smith & Mansfield road runs through the immense coal fields in the Huntington and Hartford basins in Sebastian county. The roads partially built and under construction are the Fort Smith & Southern, which within a few months will be completed *via* Nashville, Ark., to Hope, on the Iron Mountain road, from whence a road is about completed to Eldorado, Ark., and is being pushed on to Alexandria, La., on the New Orleans & Pacific road; the Texarkana & Northern is completed to Red river, the river bridged and fifty miles northward under contract and building. This will tap the Fort Smith & Southern at Center Point, in Arkansas. These roads will be completed within eighteen months and open up to Fort Smith a direct connection with New Orleans and Galveston and at no distant day Sabine Pass, furnishing a market for its coal and manufactured articles, as well as pouring into its lap the resources of a wider scope of country even than it now has. The Kansas City, Pittsburgh & Gulf is now completed to Sulphur Springs, Ark., and pushing rapidly south to Fort Smith. This road will place Fort Smith within ten hours' travel of Kansas City and open up an immense traffic in fruits, berries and early vegetables, for the cultivation of which the country around Fort Smith is so well adapted, as well as creating a further demand for coal. The Fort Smith, Paris & Dardanelle road has five miles built and the right-of-way secured over nearly the whole eighty miles. This will add a large and valuable section to Fort Smith enterprise.

These roads place Fort Smith within easy reach of some of the finest timber and mineral regions on the continent and make the city one of the best points for a rapid growth into a large and prosperous wholesaling and manufacturing city. The contemplated

roads which have either been surveyed or located, or are now being located, are a road south of the Arkansas river to Little Rock, and a road branching from the Kansas & Arkansas Valley road at Illinois Station, thence west across the Indian Territory to near Oklahoma, where it will again branch, running west through Guthrie and Oklahoma City. A few moments spent in examining the map and tracing the roads referred to will convince the most sceptical that Fort Smith's future is already assured, so far as railroads running through the finest of agricultural, mineral and timber regions and centering here, can assure it.

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## MANUFACTURING ADVANTAGES.

The manufacturing advantages of Fort Smith are unexcelled by any point in the country. It has cheap fuel. Water that will not injure the boilers. It has competing systems of railroads in every direction. It has timber in endless variety and almost without limit immediately at its door. The farming country is rapidly developing and filling up, while there are but comparatively few with capital to take advantage of the splendid manufacturing openings. The manufacturing that is done here has grown up among our own citizens and almost exclusively on home capital.

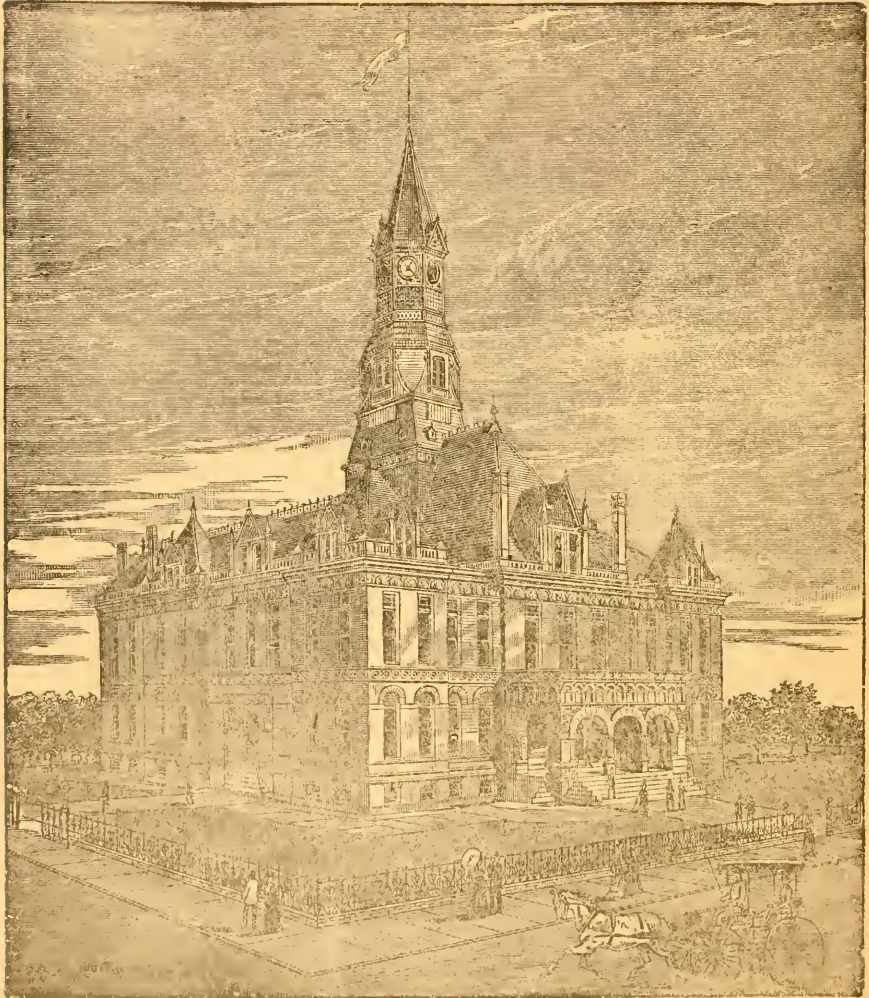
Every factory in Fort Smith is running to the extent of its capacity and nearly all of those engaged in manufacturing would welcome others in the same lines.

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## MATERIALS FOR MANUFACTURING.

Many of the raw materials which abound in the country surrounding Fort Smith are as yet entirely undeveloped, owing in some cases to remoteness from transportation and in more cases to lack of time, knowledge and capital on the part of our present citizens to investigate them. With the increased railroad facilities of the lines now building, the first of these causes will be

largely removed and the opportunity is open to the reader of this pamphlet to benefit himself in the removal of the second. The finest soft manganese (pyrolusite) is found in the county south



COURT HOUSE AND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

of Fort Smith, and fifty miles beyond perhaps the largest deposit of antimony (stibnite) in the United States is located. The lead and zinc ores in the northern part of the State are now being for the first time developed and in that section and southwest Missouri



the mining is already extensive. These ores are mostly being shipped to La Salle, Ill., for treatment, although Fort Smith, with its cheap and unsurpassed fuel and close proximity affords good opportunity for the location of reduction works to handle them. Gypsum, marls, chalks and marble, exist in the country tributary to Fort Smith, but have never been developed. The above are some of the raw materials as yet new and untried. There are many whose present supply is unlimited and which can be very profitably manufactured at this time in Fort Smith; among them are the numerous clays found in the vicinity of Fort Smith, only one or two varieties of which have as yet been utilized. The shale-clay, known to geologists as the Akron shale, which makes the best of sewer-pipe and paving brick, is found in unlimited quantities. From this the brick were made to pave Garrison avenue in this city, and a number of streets in other western cities are now being paved with brick made of clay from the vicinity of Fort Smith. Few realize the value of these clays. Two large plants are now running to their fullest capacity in the manufacture of paving brick alone, and a third one is now being put in and they have orders enough ahead to keep them at work for a year. The demand for a good paving-brick is so great and the material from which it can be made is found in so few places that this industry alone will, from the present outlook, employ one thousand men at Fort Smith in a very few years. The analysis of the shale used for this purpose, as given by Prof. Branner, State Geologist, is as follows:

Silica .....	58.43 per ct.
Alumina .....	22.50 "
Oxide of Iron .....	8.36 "
Magnesia ..	1.14 "
Potash .....	2.18 "
Soda .....	1.03 "
Sulphur .....	0.16 "
Loss on ignition .....	6.87 "

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100.99

Brick made from this clay and tested at the School of Mines, Columbia College, New York City, stood a crushing stress of 170 tons, or more than 5,500 pounds to the cubic inch, very nearly as much as the hardest of granite will stand.



In the geological survey made of Arkansas prior to 1860, by Prof. Owen, these deposits of shale were discovered and commented upon in the report. Owen says in his work that Arkansas is the first State in the Union in valuable shales, and the best of the deposits are within sixteen miles of Fort Smith. Fire clay and potters' clay are also found, but their location and usefulness have not been so practically demonstrated as the paving brick and sewer pipe clays. This is the field for the enterprising brick and sewer-pipe maker. Fuel can be had at the minimum price and the material for making the product is abundant. The brick will bear transportation without loss and are now wanted by the cities of Galveston, New Orleans and Memphis in large quantities.

Besides the clays there are many other abundant materials now to be worked at this point. No place offers better openings for a cotton factory, wagon factory, stove and hollow-ware foundries, woollen factory, chair factory, furniture factories, tannery, agricultural tools and woodenware, machinery works and many other lines. The citizens have always been ready to offer reasonable inducements to those who in good faith make business propositions, and are now ready to do so. The matter of fuel is treated fully under the heading of coal, to which the reader is referred.

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## PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

The last of the factors set forth as necessary to the growth of an inland city is its desirability as a place of residence. This factor depends in turn on many others, as health, climate, laws, schools, morality, society, public conveniences and business advantages. All of these items can best be judged of by personal visit. Fort Smith claims them all in their best degree, and invites your careful investigation of her claims. They are variously treated of in the following general division of this pamphlet.



# ⇒ FORT © SMITH, © ARK. ⇐

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## DESCRIPTIVE.

This city is situated on the high bank of the Arkansas and Poteau rivers, the lowest part of it being at least 20 feet above the highest water mark, the greater part of it from 50 to 75 feet above. The surface of the ground is such as to furnish excellent natural drainage in every part of it. The corporate line on the west is the line between the State of Arkansas and the Indian Territory. There is no town of 3,500 inhabitants within one hundred and sixty-five miles of it. The nearest large city north is Kansas City, Mo.; east, is Memphis, and south, Dallas, Texas. Its topographical and geographical situation is all that could be asked to insure its growth almost independent of other surroundings. In 1880 it had a population of 3,000, which, in 1885, had increased to 6,000, and in 1893 to 15,000, of which but about 1,200 are negroes and the percentage of colored inhabitants is steadily decreasing. But it is not dependent on its situation alone, which is equal if not superior to Kansas City, Mo., or any western city of that class. It is the center of a fine agricultural and horticultural section of country, in which the length of season is such that with intelligent farming, total crop failures, which so often occur in other sections, are virtually impossible. It is also the entry to the vast coal fields of Sebastian and Scott counties in Arkansas and the Indian Territory, coal mining being carried on ranging from ten to fifty miles from the city. It is also the gateway to one of the finest mineral regions immediately south of it, where antimony, manganese, fire clay, gypsum and chalk are known to abound, and there is good reason to believe that lead, zinc and iron will be developed in paying quantities, and it is also surrounded with immense forests of valuable timber in almost limitless variety.

## H E A L T H .

The following is quoted from a recent report on this subject by the Secretary of the Fort Smith Board of Health, a prominent physician of many years' practice in the city: "There are no diseases especially peculiar to this city or vicinity. Typhoid fever of the kind usual in more northern latitudes is almost unknown. We have never had an epidemic of diphtheria nor scarlet fever, nor has yellow fever ever made its appearance here, this city being out of its zone. This climate is peculiarly favorable to chronic pulmonary diseases, the mountains to the north and west modifying the severe cold and sudden changes of winter, and the period being long in which the people can live in the open air. The mortality rate from all causes for the year 1892, was 16 per 1,000 of population. This was to some extent increased by the presence of a large number of witnesses in the criminal cases from the Indian Territory tried before the United States Court here, who expose themselves to sickness and death by their carelessness; and to the further fact that cities or towns having a public charity hospital, as is the case here, draw a certain number of chronic and incurable cases from a large scope of contiguous territory. With an ideal climate, a perfect sewer system, a pure water supply, and no local causes for disease, there is no reason why Fort Smith should not always rank in point of healthfulness among the first cities of America."

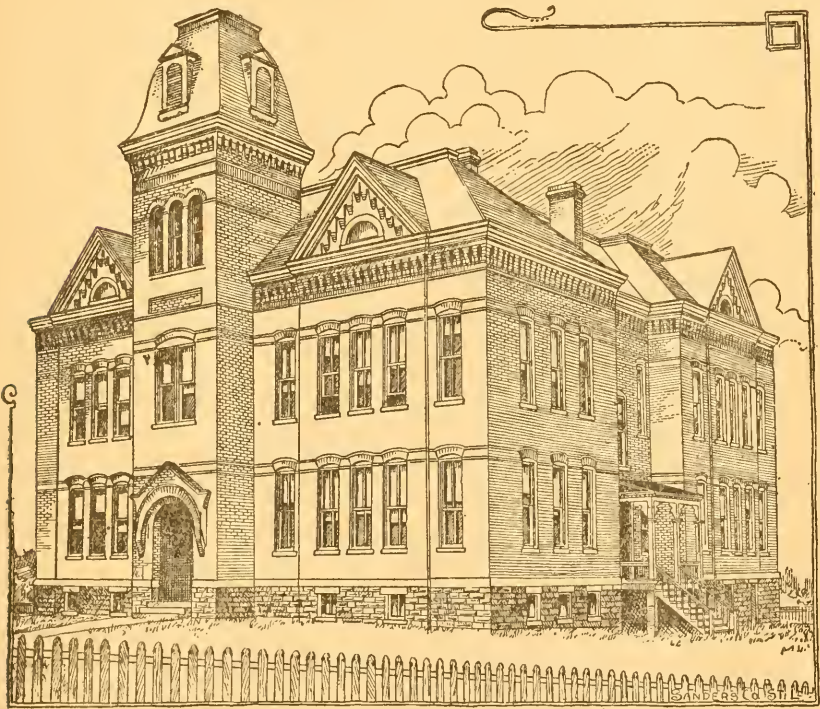
The executions of criminals tried by the United States Court (which has jurisdiction over a large part of the Indian Territory, and consequently the largest criminal docket in the country), also enters into the Fort Smith death rate as given. Fort Smith is as healthy as most of the cities of the country, as shown by the census returns.

## C L I M A T E .

The climate of Arkansas is not so strictly governed by latitude as many other parts of the country, from the fact that the ranges of hills and mountains materially modify the temperature. There can be found greater variation in the thermometer at any given hour of the day in Arkansas than in any State where the surface

is less broken. The ranges of hills and mountains shelter the State from the blizzards of the Northern States and the cold waves of the Southwest called *northerns*.

It is generally supposed by those who have not given the subject sufficient attention, that June, July and August, in Arkansas, are much hotter than the same months in Wisconsin, and other northern States when in point of fact, it is the reverse. The northern summer is short—much shorter than in the South, but



DUVAL SCHOOL BUILDING.

it is much hotter while it lasts, and for that reason vegetation gets its required amount of sunshine in a smaller number of days. Observations on temperature made by scientific men since 1819 have been preserved in the Smithsonian Institution. They have been published from time to time, and submitted by its secretary to the Agricultural Bureau and embodied in its reports. From an examination of these tables it will be seen that the proposition advanced is incontestably true. In one of the reports the fact is

stated and philosophically accounted for as follows: "For though there is absolutely more heat in the latitude of Arkansas during the year than in Wisconsin, yet there is more heat received in Wisconsin during the three months of midsummer than in Arkansas at the same time." In the same report, and accompanying it, is a table showing the sun's diurnal intensity at every ten degrees of latitude. It further says: "On the 15th of June the sun is more than  $23^{\circ}$  north of the equator, and therefore it might be readily inferred that the intensity of heat should be greater at this latitude than at the equator; but that it should continue to increase beyond this, even to the pole, as indicated by this table, might not at first sight appear clear. It will, however, be understood when it is recollected that, though in a northern latitude, the obliquity of the rays is greater and on this account the intensity should be less; yet the long duration of the day is more than sufficient to compensate for the effect, and produces the result exhibited."

By comparing the daily reports of the weather, as given by the press in the summer, it will be readily seen that Fort Smith, during the months of June, July and August, averaged a number of degrees lower temperature than did Saratoga, N. Y. At Fort Smith the mean temperature for December, January and February is forty-three degrees three minutes, and for June, July and August, seventy-nine degrees one minute. There is but little snow or ice.

Of course, so long a season of warm, genial weather must greatly facilitate the labors of the husbandmen. Plowing may be done every month in the year. No country furnishes a greater number of days in the year in which outdoor work can be performed. Garden crops are planted early; potatoes and peas often in February, and others in March. The rains are generally seasonable and propitious. The winter freezes, being so light, only tend to give a mellowness to the soil it would, probably, not otherwise possess, and are not of sufficient duration to interfere with early and late planting. The climate is conducive to good health and longevity. Sunstrokes and headaches, brought on by heat, are here unknown. According to health statistics, Arkansas is entitled to rank high among the other States.

The following tables of weather will give an idea of our temperature and rainfall.



"From January to June, inclusive, all data are computed for twelve years, and from July to December, inclusive, for thirteen years. Thus the mean temperature for January is the mean for that month from 1880 to 1891, inclusive, and that for July, from 1879 to 1891, inclusive.

MONTH.	Mean Temperature.	Average Precipitation.
January . . . . .	40.9	5.13 inches.
February . . . . .	46.7	5.90 "
March . . . . .	52.6	4.96 "
April . . . . .	63.5	4.76 "
May . . . . .	70.2	5.20 "
June . . . . .	77.8	4.39 "
July . . . . .	81.2	3.88 "
August . . . . .	79.1	3.92 "
September . . . . .	73.1	3.23 "
October . . . . .	63.9	2.57 "
November . . . . .	51.3	5.53 "
December . . . . .	45.6	4.35 "
For Winter . . . . .	44.4	15.38 "
For Spring . . . . .	62.1	14.92 "
For Summer . . . . .	79.4	12.19 "
For Autumn . . . . .	62.8	11.33 "
For Year . . . . .	62.3	53.82 "

MONTH.	AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS.		Highest Tempera- ture.	Lowest Tempera- ture.
	Minimum Temperature Below 32.	Maximum Temperature Above 90.		
January . . . . .	14	0	78	* 5
February . . . . .	7	0	78	8
March . . . . .	3	0	84	16
April . . . . .	once in 2 years	once in 12 years	94	28
May . . . . .	0	once in 2 years	93	44
June . . . . .	0	9	98	51
July . . . . .	0	16	101	60
August . . . . .	0	11	102	52
September . . . . .	0	4	97	47
October . . . . .	0	0	90	33
November . . . . .	3	0	83	10
December . . . . .	8	0	78	6

\* 5 below zero; coldest on record; January 9, 1886.

MONTH.	AVERAGE NUMBER DAYS WEATHER WAS:			
	CLOUD- LESS.	PARTLY CLOUDY.	CLOUDY.	RAINY (.01 INCH OR MORE).
January . . . . .	10	9	12	11
February . . . . .	8	8	12	10
March . . . . .	11	9	11	11
April . . . . .	12	10	8	10
May . . . . .	11	13	7	10
June . . . . .	10	14	6	11
July . . . . .	11	14	6	10
August . . . . .	14	12	5	9
September . . . . .	13	11	6	7
October . . . . .	16	10	5	7
November . . . . .	13	8	9	9
December . . . . .	11	9	11	9
The Year . . . . .	140	127	98	114

*Percentage of Cloudiness.*—January, 54; February, 57; March, 51; April, 46; May, 45; June, 44; July, 43; August, 38; September, 40; October, 36; November, 46; December, 52; for the year, 46.

#### FROSTS.

“Earliest date of first killing frost, October 22d; latest, December 4th. Average date of first killing frost, November 12th.

“Earliest date of last killing frost, February 23d; latest, April 14th. Average date of last killing frost, March 19th.

#### WIND.

*Prevailing Direction.*—January, northwest; February, south; March, northwest; April, south; May, south; June, southwest; July, southwest; August, northeast; September, northeast; October, northwest; November, south; December, northwest; for the year, south.

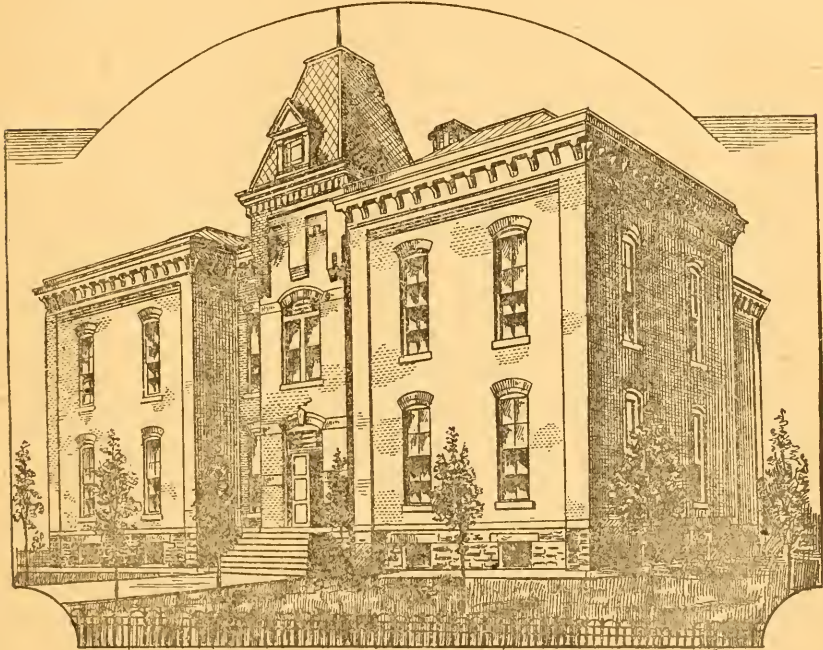
“F. H. CLARKE (U. S. Weather Bureau),

“Assistant Director Arkansas Weather Service.”

The farming season in the region around Fort Smith is at least five weeks longer than in the mountain or northern counties, not more than fifty miles distant. It is not necessary in the summer season to make a long trip north to find a change of temperature. In most parts of the State, by traveling a few miles, a change may be found by going to the mountain ridges, where

quite a number of very creditable summer resorts have already been established.

It is the boast of Arkansas that she is free from the extreme heat of the South and the extreme cold of the North. The average rain fall is 54 inches, and the average temperature, 62 degrees, the highest during 1892 being 101 degrees and the lowest 7 degrees.



HOWARD SCHOOL BUILDING (COLORED SCHOOL).

## THE LAWS.

The general system of Arkansas jurisprudence is good, as may be deduced from the fact that the United States has adopted its practice in the Indian Territory courts. Our Legislature protects the poor man, although it does not oppress nor put obstacles in the way of the rich. We append the law relative to

### HOMESTEAD AND OTHER EXEMPTIONS.

The provisions of the Constitution of the State in the matter of exemption laws are very liberal.

Article IX. of the Constitution provides as follows:

SEC. 2. The personal property of any resident of this State who is married or the head of a family, in specific articles to be selected by such resident, not exceeding in value the sum of five hundred dollars in addition to his or her wearing apparel and that of his or her family, shall be exempt from seizure on attachment, or sale on execution, or other process from any court on debt by contract.

SEC. 3. The homestead of any resident of this State, who is married or the head of a family, shall not be subject to the lien of any judgment or decree of any court, or sale under execution or other process thereon, except such as may be rendered for the purchase money or for specific liens, laborers' or mechanics' liens for improving the same, or for taxes, or against executors, administrators, guardians, receivers, attorneys for moneys collected by them and other trustees of an express trust for money due from them in their fiduciary capacity.

SEC. 4. The homestead outside of any city, town or village, owned and occupied as a residence, shall consist of not exceeding 160 acres of land with the improvements thereon, to be selected by the owner, provided the same shall not exceed in value the sum of \$2,500, and in no event shall the homestead be reduced to less than 80 acres without regard to value.

The Constitution further provides, that if the owner of the homestead dies, it shall vest in the widow and minor children.

To the resident of the State who is not married, personal property in articles to be selected by such resident not exceeding \$250, in addition to wearing apparel, is exempt from seizure or sale under attachment or execution issued out of any court for the collection of any debt by contract. It is, however, provided, also, that no property shall be exempt from execution for debts contracted for the purchase thereof while in the hands of the original purchaser, or from judgments for tort or fraud.

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## TAXATION.

The sensible man in changing his location will always look into the matter of taxation, and his choice, other things being equal, will be determined in favor of that State where taxation is the lightest and best guarded by constitutional limitations. Fort Smith, in this, as well as other advantages offered by her, challenges comparison.

The utmost limit of taxation is two and one-half per cent., and that upon an assessment which does not exceed one third of the true value of the property, so that if the full taxing power

under the Constitution of the State were put in force the total tax on true values would only be eighty-three one-hundredths of one per cent. This taxing power is limited by the Constitution as follows :

For all State purposes, one per cent.

For all county purposes, half of one per cent.

For all city purposes, half of one per cent.

For all special school taxes, half of one per cent.

The latter tax can only be levied in the several school districts in which a majority of the electors vote for it at the annual school elections held in the month of May, at a time when there is no political election held. At the present time the State tax is only half of one per cent., two fifths of which is for school purposes. It will be noticed that the highest rate that can be reached, outside of cities and towns, is one per cent., and in cities two per cent., outside of the special school tax, which is a voluntary tax. This, on the assessment as before stated, would amount on the true values outside of the towns to one-third of one per cent., and in cities and towns sixty-seven one-hundredths of one per cent. The taxes for the present year in Fort Smith are one and a quarter per cent., forty-two one-hundredths of one per cent. on true values.

## MECHANICS' LIEN LAWS.

Arkansas is not behind her sister States in protecting the mechanic and laborer, as well as the farmer, by laws which secure to them payment for work and labor performed or material furnished, while the Constitution protects the unfortunate debtor against the rapacity of the greedy creditor, saving to him his homestead and a reasonable amount of personal property where-with to protect and care for his family.

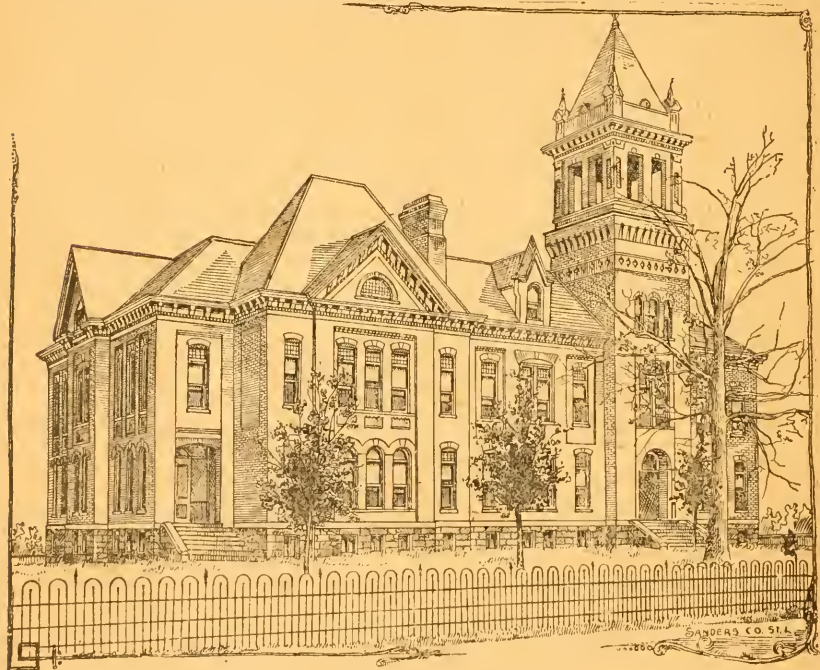
There are two ways in which the mechanic, laborer and material man are protected. One is by a law which requires the party to give notice to the builder that he is going to do the work or furnish the material and the probable cost of such work or material. When this is done the builder is justified in withholding such amount until he is satisfied that such party has been paid, and under the law, becomes surety to the party serving such notice, not, however, exceeding the contract price of the building



or improvement, upon which the party has a lien under the law.

The mechanic, laborer, and material men who have failed to give such notice, have still further protection, in this, that the builder is required to withhold one-third of the contract price for ten days after the completion of said contract, in order that all may have a chance to present their claims for work done or material furnished.

Those who wish to look further into the matter of Arkansas law, are referred to Mansfield's Digest of the Statutes.



BELLE GROVE SCHOOL BUILDING.

## SCHOOLS.

There are few, if any, cities of the size of Fort Smith so well provided with school buildings and facilities. It has now five buildings which, together with the grounds, are worth \$170,000. Its advantages do not consist alone in its buildings. The school system is excellent and the teachers of a high order of talent. There are one superintendent and forty teachers employed at an aggregate monthly salary of \$2,630.

In May, 1884, Congress donated to this city the abandoned military reservation, to be sold by the city for the benefit of the public schools. This ground was subdivided into about 1,200 lots, 50x140 feet. Taking the past sales of a part of this property as a criterion, it is reasonable to believe that a permanent school fund of upwards of \$750,000 will be raised, the use of this being restricted by an act of the General Assembly for the purpose of preserving it as a permanent endowment fund. Properly guarded, the interest of this fund will be sufficient for many years to come to pay all the expenses of the schools in this city.

In addition to the public schools there are two convent schools—a Lutheran school, commercial college, and several private schools.

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### M O R A L I T Y .

The record of the newspapers and courts is a testimonial to the public and private virtue of the citizens of Western Arkansas. Divorces and scandals are proportionately fewer here than in most of the other States. It is not only against the law to carry concealed weapons, but is an offense against the State, punishable by heavy fines and imprisonment to sell a revolver smaller than army size or cartridge for one. Games of chance for money are forbidden. The sale of any kind of goods, or having a store open for trade, except those selling eatables, on Sunday, is a misdemeanor.

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### T E M P E R A N C E .

With reference to temperance, Arkansas has, in the imagination of many, been synonymous with whiskey. A few solid facts from the records will convince the fair-minded that such an opinion is erroneous. High license and local option is the law in Arkansas. Every two years the question of license or no license, is submitted at a general election. At the election held in 1892, twenty-one counties, containing about 16,000 square miles, gave a majority against license. In the remaining 54 counties, in more than half of the territory embraced in them, no license can be obtained. The vote is by township and wards, and no license can be granted in any township or ward, although in the county in which it is located there be a majority for license, unless that particular township or ward gave a majority for license. The

total majority in the State at that election for license was 34,000, in a vote of 33,900 less than was cast for State officers ; 25,000 of that majority was given in 18 counties where the colored voters are in majority or compose a large portion of voters of the county. Again, there have been some seventy special acts passed by the Legislature since 1879 prohibiting the sale of liquors within circles varying from six to twenty miles in diameter, and but five of these acts have ever been repealed, covering but about 72 square miles, while the territory covered by the seventy acts is about 3,170 square miles, where prohibition exists by positive enactments of the General Assembly. The above statement of facts makes Arkansas compare favorably with any of the States where prohibition is not the law, and with a number where it is.

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## CHURCHES.

In the matter of churches Fort Smith is fairly supplied, every prominent denomination being represented by one or more churches.

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## SOCIETY.

For a place of its size Fort Smith is wonderfully cosmopolitan. Its population is made up not only of citizens from nearly every State in the Union, but from most of the European nations. Among the latter the Germans predominate and are excellent citizens. In politics the city is nearly equally divided, being slightly Democratic at the present time. Having been a favorite army post for many years, Fort Smith's society has always enjoyed the reputation of being cultured and agreeable.

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## PUBLIC CONVEINENCES.

Fort Smith has an excellent sewer system extending over the whole city, consisting of twenty-six miles of sewers. The water-works has twenty miles of pipe laid. The pressure is so great that fire-engines are not used, the fire apparatus being hose carriages and hook and ladder trucks. The efficiency of the water system may best be shown by the fact that during the past three years the total loss by fire did not exceed \$13,635.00 and that every fire was confined to the building in which it originated. The city is well lighted by gas and electricity and is perhaps alone

in the possession of two complete telephone systems. In addition to the foregoing it has nine miles of street railway, the different lines of which unite in the business portion and diverge to the various residence sections. At present, horse-power is the motive force, although the electric equipment is proposed during the current year.

Fort Smith has one of the handsomest and best equipped opera houses in the Southwest, which is visited annually by many of the best theatrical attractions in the country, *en route* to and from Texas and other Southern cities.

Another thing may be considered in this connection. Owing to the mildness of the climate it is not necessary to build the houses so expensively as in the colder latitudes. Houses, in every way suitable to the climate, may be built, counting material at the same price, for two-thirds the cost that houses of the same dimensions could be built for in the Northern States, for the reason that much more expensive foundations and other work has to be used in those sections to protect the inmates from the extreme cold.

All around the city stone for sidewalks can be obtained from an inch to five inches thick, in any sized slabs desired. Sidewalks are laid with this stone four feet wide and two inches thick at forty-five cents per square yard.

Excellent building stone can be found in inexhaustible quarries even within the city limits and can be delivered in all parts of the city at from \$1 to \$1.20 per perch.

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## COAL.

This, perhaps, one of the greatest of civilizers, abounds at the very door of the city. The greater part of Sebastian county, in which Fort Smith is located, and Scott county, immediately south, is underlaid with coal, varying from thirty-two inches to seven feet in thickness. The coal in Sebastian county is found and mined within three miles of this city and at various other points in the county. The thickest veins now being mined are at Huntington, Greenwood and Jenny Lind basins, but equally as good basins have been found in other parts of the county not yet reached by the railroads. This coal is of that peculiar character called semi-anthracite. When properly mined it is free from sulphur. It is almost smokeless in burning and burns



to an ash nearly as soft as wood ashes. Its analysis shows that it contains eighty per cent. of fixed carbon, thus making it in all respects equal to and in some respects superior to the best steam-producing and domestic coal found in any other section of the country. The following is an average analysis of Sebastian county coal:

Fixed Carbon.....	79.853
Ash.....	5.999
Water.....	.915
Sulphur.....	1.680
Vol. hydro. carbon.....	11.553
Specific gravity, 1.327.	100.000

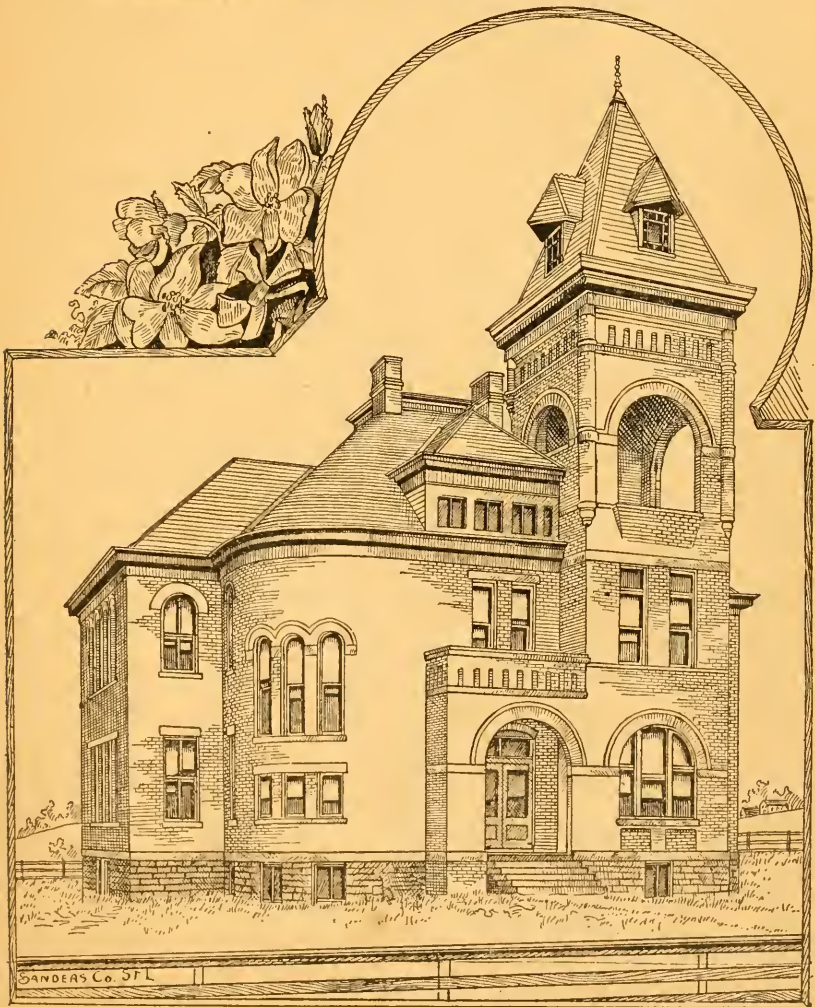
Good steam coal from these mines can be laid down at Fort Smith at one dollar per ton. In Scott county, through which the Fort Smith & Southern Railroad is now building, are large fields of excellent gas and coking coal. In addition to this, in the Indian Territory, on the railroad from Fort Smith, Ark., to Paris, Tex., there are immense fields of gas and coking coal of the finest quality. In these fields there are two veins, each four feet thick, forty-two feet apart, dipping at an angle of 30 degrees. The nearest mine opened into this coal is about twenty-eight miles from the city. The output of coal in Sebastian County alone, during the past three years, has increased from 300 tons per day in 1890 to 5,000 tons per day in 1893 and will, within the next three years, be more than doubled.

## WHOLESALE AND JOBBING.

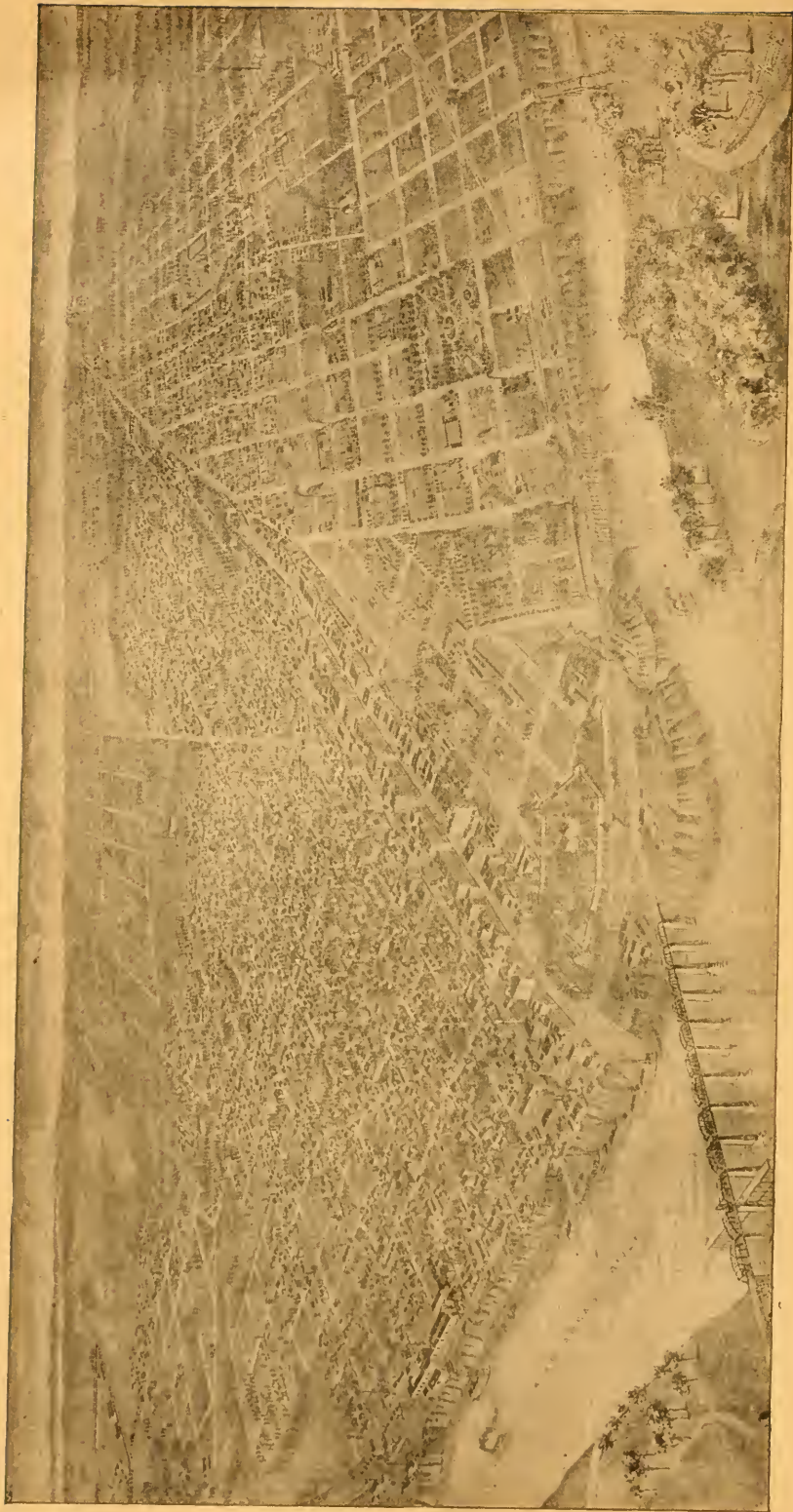
Five years ago but comparatively little jobbing was done in the city; so little, in fact, that drummers from Little Rock and Memphis did quite a thriving trade in the city and surrounding country. Now neither of those cities make any effort for trade in this section. There are now in the city four exclusively wholesale groceries, two exclusively wholesale dry goods houses, one wholesale boot and shoe house, one wholesale clothing house, one exclusively wholesale hardware house, two wholesale liquor houses, one wholesale drug house, one wholesale crockery house, having a capital of upwards of a million dollars. In addition to these, there are twelve other establishments, the business of which is largely in the jobbing line. The field for this kind of business is almost limitless, and is constantly growing. The Indian country is rapidly settling up. There are already upwards of four times



as many whites as Indians in the Territory, and it will doubtless be opened fully to settlement within five years. The new railroads being built will add very largely to the Territory legitimately belonging to the Fort Smith merchants. This class of business need only be limited by the amount of capital invested in it and the enterprise with which it is pushed. It has more than doubled within the past year and is steadily and rapidly increasing.

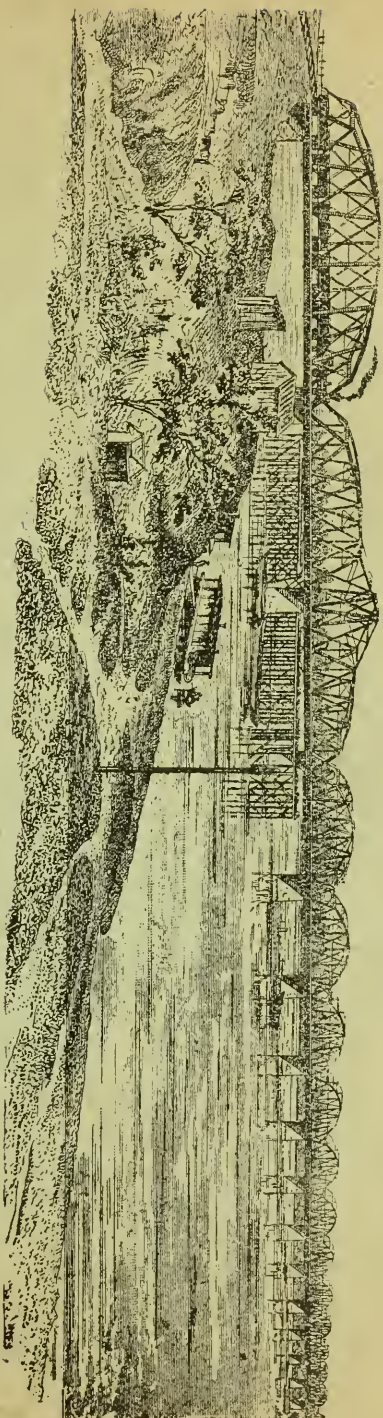


LINCOLN SCHOOL BUILDING (COLORED SCHOOL).



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF FORT SMITH, ARK.





#### DESCRIPTION:

Railroad, Foot and Wagon Bridge. It has Thirteen Spans, including the Draw and is 2,380 feet long. 3,800,000 pounds of Steel and Iron were used in its construction. It is the Pegram Patent, and built for the Kansas & Arkansas Valley Railway Company.

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